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POEMS
TOGETHER WITH
BALLADS OF OLD BIRMINGHAM.
NEW SERIES

POEMS
TOGETHER WITH
BALLADS OF OLD
BIRMINGHAM

NEW SERIES

BY
E. M. RUDLAND

LONDON
DAVID NUTT
17 GRAPE STREET, NEW OXFORD STREET, W.C.
1914

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8834P

TO MRS. NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN,
A DESCENDANT OF THE ANCIENT FAMILY OF
"DE BIRMINGHAM"

918035

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THE LITTLE PEOPLE

I saw the little people
Upon the far green moor,
With bluebells making music,
Come dancing four by four.

Beside the circled willows
That spell the magic ring,
Held fast by chains of moonlight,
The little people sing—

“ O mortal, though thou listenest,
Thou never wilt be wise,
Till thou hast kissed the starlight
Within a fairy’s eyes.”

They blow convolvulus trumpets,
And walk with daisy wands.
They nestle in the cowslips,
And clap their tiny hands.

They ride on scarlet butterflies,
And soar on blue bird’s wings,
And ’mid the faint forget-me-nots
Talk of sweet fairy things.

Within the golden crocus
They hold a fairy school,
And flaunt their silken gossamers
Beside the lilded pool.

They sail on boats of marigolds,
And play on poppy drums,
As to her couch of primroses
The queen of fairies comes.

“O mortal, that art boldest,
My throne is high and low,
The little folk shall serve thee
If thou wilt wish it so.”

“O kiss me, little lady,
And let me kiss thine eyes,
That I may kiss their starlight,
And so shall I be wise.”

She kissed me—Queen of Fairies—
Because I would be wise,
And I have kissed the starlight
That nestles in her eyes.

I love the little people,
And when I am so poor,
I may not join the revel
Upon the far green moor,

Where all is blithe and gladness,
Where all is sport and play,
Then you shall know—Be sorry—
I shall be dead that day.

Within the circled willows
That spell the magic ring,
There bury me by moonlight,
To hear the fairies sing—

“O mortal, though thou listenest,
Thou never wilt be wise,
Till thou hast kissed the starlight
Within a fairy’s eyes.”

4 THE BELL OF THE ANGEL GABRIEL

THE BELL OF THE ANGEL GABRIEL

Dulcis sisto melis ; vocor campana Gabrielis.

(I am of sweet sound ; I am called the bell of Gabriel.)

“ Every day, old stories tell,
The bell of the Angel Gabriel
Sweetly rings. To whom doth hear,
The ways of God are opened clear.”

A king whose throne was the golden East,
Was told the rhyme at a merry feast ;
And he cried aloud “ Who hath heard full well
The bell of the Angel Gabriel,
Ye shall find them all and shall bring them here,
That the ways of God may be opened clear.”

So was sped o'er the Eastern land
The word of the mighty King's command,
“ All who list to the sweet-toned bell
Of the holy Angel Gabriel,
And to whom the ways of God are shown,
Shall swiftly come to the great King's throne.”

THE BELL OF THE ANGEL GABRIEL 5

To every man was the King's word sped.
Every man bowed low his head,
His face ashamed. No man could tell
Of the bell of the Angel Gabriel.
And the riders asked with faltering breath,
Where be they whom the King seeketh ?

To every woman high and low,
The riders told that the King would know
Of the bell of the Angel Gabriel,
And the ways of God that were known full well.
No woman in all the Eastern land
Could answer aught to the King's command.

But an aged woman of ninety years,
Who thought of her childhood mid'st her tears,
Turned to the King's great lords and said,
" The words of the King be prosperéd,
Let the King be praised !" And she strangely smiled,
" Truly, great lords, ye shall ask a child."

To every child was the King's word sent,
" Have ye heard in your hearts so innocent
The bell of the Angel Gabriel,
And the ways of God that the stories tell ?
'Tis the great King's will that before his throne
Ye come, that the ways of God be known."

6 THE BELL OF THE ANGEL GABRIEL

Every child in that Eastern land
Spake at the throne at the King's command,
" Every day we hear it well,
The bell of the Angel Gabriel ;
And the ways of God are peace and love,
But deeds of sin are the bane thereof."

The great King spake to his lords and smiled,
" God blesseth us, woman and man and child.
Now bless'd be they that hear so well
The bell of the Angel Gabriel.
The ways of God are known most clear,
When strong men talk with their children near."

" Every day, old stories tell,
The bell of the Angel Gabriel
Sweetly rings. To whom doth hear,
The ways of God are opened clear."

LINES WRITTEN AT A FIRE

SLAYER, Destroyer,
Ravisher stark,
Leaping from darkness
Into the dark.

Fearfullest lover,
With measureless lust
Of temple and city,
Of just and unjust.

Now for thy pleasure,
Servant of man.
Now without measure,
Master and ban.

Swingeth the earth as a lamp
Across the spaces of dark,
Borne by the terrible hands
That lit the primordial spark.

Fire of the congregate stars,
Pulse of the farmost gloom,
Alive—in the heart of the world—
Doom of inscrutable doom.

Flame of life and desire,
Of man and the thought of man ;
Destinate light to the light,
By the terrible author's plan.

List to the lilt of the flame—
A lover's sigh in the night ;
The softest wish of a maid
That is blushed in her own despite.

Hark to the jubilant flame—
A blatant, victorious host,
Singing triumphal pæans
Over the shrieks of the lost.

Hark to the lull of the flame
Plumming itself of its lust ;
Crooning and moaning low,
Prone on the champéed dust.

Smoke, now as babe-eyes blue,
Now grey as Triton's beard,
Now white as crested foam
On Galway's crags upreared.

Now gone like old men's locks,
With visaged waters fair
Like wavelets to the land
Rolling on parchéd air.

Now curled as crispéd clouds
That o'er gold sunsets loom.
Now black as sullen wrath
Delivering o'er to doom.

Now dense as muddy thought
That thickly strives to rise.
Blank like oblivious glare
Set in death's sightless eyes.

Imprisoned till now in the dark,
Spirits from purgatory free,
Shrieking to burst their chains,
Snap them and break them with glee.

Demon imps let loose
Chase them with reck and yell,
With flaming forks and with spears,
Seeking the loot of hell.

And Gehenna's furious hosts
Burst with a sulphurous roll
O'er the path of the fiery scouts,
Mad for each 'scapéd soul.

Last, with lust aglow,
Hot with demoniac pride,
Satan, scarlet robed,
Rushes with terrible stride.

Leaving behind for sign
Horrible murderous wrack,
The ash of the strangled prey,
And the dust of his wings hell-black.

Fall'n Lethe's coverlets,
Strewn soot of chymned hell,
Avernus wastes of gloom,
Sullen, unspeakable.

Ravished and stolen,
Fast in thy home,
Where are thy wantons,
Lover of Rome ?

Waster and callous,
Swift to destroy,
Where is thy bridal,
Lover of Troy ?

Somewhere are gathered
In shadowy guise,
City and temple,
Captive and prize.

All thou hast ravished
With passionate spcll,
Cities and temples
In spectral hell.

Flaming nightmares
Of evils done,
Raped with sunlight
Stol'n from the sun.

Fearfullest lover,
With measureless lust
Of temple and city,
Of just and unjust.

Now for thy pleasure,
Servant of man.
Now without measure,
Master and ban.

YOUTH'S DREAMS

THE fairy kiss and the willow wand
Sprited me into the fairy land.
All the light was an elfish blue,
Sprites who were guarding the portals two,
Cried with poise of a rose-thorn spear,
“ Only the young and the glad are dear.”

I cried, “ I am come to find my dreams
I dreamed in youth in the land which seems,
'Ere yet from my eyes the wonder glow
Had gone to its place in the land ye know.
And now am I come that mine eyes may call
To the light that is first and last of all.

“ I seek all memories dear of old,
All looks of love and all dreams of gold.
By the fairy kiss and the willow wand,
Spirits, mine is the fairy land.
And all that was and that yet shall be,
Are mine, by the fairy spell on me.”

The rose-thorn spear aside was lain,
And rustling fell on the portals twain,
Soft rainbow hues that aside were flung
Where the grinning moon in his gladness swung.
And starlight, woven for fairies' dress,
Twinkled through folds of its wistfulness.

"Mortal bold, thou must take my hand
Lest thou fall through the spaces of fairyland."
'Twas a wee, wee fairy that spake to me,
Tweaking my ears in his elfish glee,
Kissing me fond when I shrieked with pain.
"Mortal, welcome thee home amain."

He led me on with a joyful prance
Where fays were dancing a fairy dance.
Cried they aloud, as they saw me come,
"Mortal fond, thou art welcome home."
Laughed they low as they kissed me o'er,
Laughed they glad as they pinched me sore.

"Amid the pearls of the dewy throne,
There shalt thou find thy dreams that are gone,
Borne by the fairies each night that hie
To the ebon throne with the days that die.
Chained with starlight that none can break,
Till the kiss of the fairy queen awake."

"Now by the might of that sweetest kiss,
The dreams that I dreamed shall be mine, I wis.
So lead me unto the ebon throne
That is built of the days that are dead and gone.
I will take each pearl, I will break each chain,
And gather mine olden dreams again."

MY LADY

My lady of the nineteen summers tall,
Amid the flowers is fairest of them all.
The sunflower lifts his ponderous head and waits,
The hollyhocks stand high about the gates,
“She comes! She comes!” the flowers together call.

The roses in the garth alone are fair,
Because they wait in rapt expectance there
Until my lady comes to give them grace,
And praise them till they blush before her face,
And tell to all the winds her beauties rare.

The lilies in the pleasaunce peal their bells
Whene'er she goes, in sadness of farewells.
But when my lady comes, with lifted head,
They look at her. The saddened notes are fled.
“She comes! She comes!” the lily chorus swells.

The fierce east wind doth rage for her and tear,
The great north wind doth seek her everywhere,
The soft west wind doth weep for her in vain,
The south doth clasp her to his arms again,
And plays with tapering zephyrs with her hair.

And winter hoar hath rent his garb of woe,
The spring hath wept because he loyes her so,
The summer in a garb of gold hath shone,
The autumn put his coloured garments on ;
And singing all her praise attendant go.

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

GOD made thee of exceeding grace.
No man might look upon thy face
But all his soul was lost, and aye
His thoughts unto thy beauty turned.

That thus an angel, fallen away
From purest ranks of heaven's array,
Serves Satan's hest in beauteous wise,
Many a good man in death hath learned.

For whoso, looking on thine eyes,
But stricken with splendid madness dies,
Consumed with fiercest dart of it,
The love-light's sweetest scorching flame.

God formed thee for sweet mirth and wit,
Yet had'st thou little joy to sit
High throned in beauty perilous,
Fair throned, named with sweet Mary's name.

God, from fair fields of lilies, thus
Hath brought thee to make mock of us
With laughter and sweet gaiety ;
So fearless and so bold of will,

Courageous, proudly hearted, free ;
Queenly amongst all queens that be ;
Child gracious amidst envious men,
The northern lands are bleak and chill.

Fair throned, sweet queen of love, that ken
Of southron days of trysting whilens
Thine hours were glad with lute and rhyme,
When lips were pursed and red to kiss.

Now sigh'st thou for that sunnier clime,
And ponderest with fond thoughts, the time
A queen might stoop and kiss on brow
Her knight, nor any, wrong in this.

Yea ! tears were on thine eyes but now,
Most piteous sweet. Shall none say how
Light slaying all, love's self is slain.
Is any man so hearted cold ?

O queen, queen love, so sweet to gain,
All lords, all knights of loving fain,
Reach hands, though death behind thee creep.
They ask not for long days nor old.

Men die for love of thee. Wilt weep,
Fair queen ? In death's stern tryst they keep
Memories live men may never tell,
How fair a queen hath kissed their lips,

And how long days were longest hell,
'Twixt kiss and kiss. How one might knell
The heaven outlived, the piteous while,
Till death smote life with dark eclipse.

Shall men say how at last thy smile
Was cursed by all true men. Beguile
An hour with tales of queens that err,
And name thee yet more false, more frail ?

Now whereso'er thou passest, stir
All eyes to meet thine eyes, the spur
Of love to set new Troy afire,
New Helen, crowned with Helen's bale.

O queen, fair queen of swift desire,
Avenged of all thy loves. How tire
The days when shorn of honour thus,
Queen crowned with beauty perilous ?

THE DOOM FLEET

Doom strode under the stars,
And drew his sword in the north,
And smote the bergs, and loosed them,
And launched Death's navy forth.
Herald, the cold wind rode,
And told of the dim white fleet
That silently rode to the South,
Draped as a winding sheet.

The cold wind called o'er ocean,
And told of the fleet of doom.
Captains heard, and sailors,
And gave it speeding room.
But the fleet of doom was silent,
Shaped 'neath the frighted stars
Like hands that clutch and that beckon,
Back of the wind's cymars.

Slowly it rode and southwards,
And stood where the great ships race.
And Doom rose, grasping his broadsword,
High in the foremost place.
And he called aloud to the liners
That sped with a tale of fear,
“The seas take toll of the ships
That pass, this many a year.”

Proudly she sailed, the Titan,
Who stately took the tide,

And laughed o'er the craft in her shadow,
Wrapt in her conscious pride.
The shape of Doom she saw not,
Nor heeded his icy breath,
Nor the wind that whispered around her—
“The toll of the seas is death.”

Calm was the sea and crouching,
Fled were the clouds with fright.
Strewn were the stars for the pathway
Of Doom that strode the height.
The chill wind rode as herald,
Doom's sword was bared. Abreast,
The fleet of death kept silence.
Onward the Titan press'd.

A flash in the skies. Doom pointed
His sword, and the death fleet stood,
And smote the bulks of the Titan,
And tore the steel and the wood.
And the crouching seas leaped upward,
Claiming the toll of Doom,
Who, aye, from the earth's beginning,
Streweth the ocean room.

Doom hath covered his face,
And gone o'er the stars his path.
Vanished, the death ships white
Flee from the place of wrath.
Now Doom, watching in wait,
Builds him a new white fleet,
Fast in the holds of the north,
Draped as a winding sheet.

JOHN DAVIDSON, DEAD

WHAT though few lone warders sway
Vigil o'er a land at play.

What though men in civic pride
Stand from bane of golf aside.

Pitiable who miss to-day
Three holes up and one to play.

What though two score thousand hive
Where but two and twenty strive.

These at least have ne'er had place
In the leading of the race.

These who fall not, yet may rise,
Girt with power and seeing eyes.

But the master-singer lone,
Lieth in the deep unknown,

All his songs for ever sung.
None know how his heart was flung

Quick beyond life's potency.
Care none where his grave may be.

Pitiable who miss to-day
Three holes up and one to play.

THE MAKING OF ANY ANGEL

TAKE thence
The kiss that was of Heaven,
His innocence.

His joyous smile,
That was but to the earth
Lent for awhile.

Then his pure faith, so meet
For Heaven,
Shall ye estreat,

And the sure ways
Of right,
That were his praise.

His kindly hand so strong,
That doth
To heaven belong.

That calm upon his face,
The reflex
Of heaven's grace.

Take then his sight,
That there may be in heaven
More light.

22 THE MAKING OF ANY ANGEL

Next take his voice,
Because all that are chosen
Rejoice.

All sense,
Because thereafter more
Intense.

His sparkling breath,
That he may evermore
Be freed from death.

Last take his soul,
That in the heaven of heavens
He may be whole.

LE CHANSON DE TOUS LES MORTS

THE children of the silences, we came—

We came with pant of birth and of desire,
To seek from day to day celestial fire,
To find anew earth's gleam a transient flame.

O life so like so many thousand lives,
Always the birth, the love, and the forgetting ;
Always the joy, the pain, the trivial duties ;
Always the sin, the shame, and the repentance.

O life, that only draw'st through birth to birth,
Through mortals the immortal pulse proceeding,
So strangely and so straightly, and yet onwards.

There are two lives. The one, of earth born,
earthy,
To keep alive the race that must be lifted,
The race that comes and goes into the silence.

Two lives there are. And one is of the spirit,
And sealed thereof, the word that leads men
upwards,
The thought, the deed that is borne on for ever.

O spirit life, that fillest all the silence,
That fall'st around and shapest mortal courses,
And hast not form nor bound, but art eternal.

24 LE CHANSON DE TOUS LES MORTS

O mortals, darkly thence and thither speeding,
Who bear the gift of life we gave, to others,
The dead, yet being dead, do lead ye onwards.

O nurse of life, O death, on whom men rest.

O death, that dost prepare us to be born,
That mouldest us afresh for higher aiming.

We come, we come again from out the silence,
The dead that have been dead, to wage new
battles,
We come, we come again, to lead the vanguard.

TO MICHAEL ANGELO

MEN called thee lonely. Could'st thou mate
With mortals ? Thou did'st walk elate

With vision, and with surest tread
Did'st climb, where'er thy spirit led,

With angels, whose swift footsteps trod
Through space, the high containing God.

What wonder men should deem thee cold,
That did'st from mortal love withhold ;

Though saw they clear, within thine eyes,
Love incommunicably wise.

How should men, being mortal, know
The thoughts of Michael Angelo ?

They knew thee something greater grown,
That saw the vision in the stone,

And hewed it out and set it free,
And gave it immortality.

The rhythm of the universe
Was chorded in thy deathless verse.

And thou could'st through the spaces rove,
And take the web and woof thereof ;

And climbing through the heavenly height,
Take up the many-coloured light

And give it shape, that men might see
Semblance of what delighted thee.

Yea ! as thou journeyed'st to and fro,
Men looked, and hushed their voices low,

And doffed their caps, and stood aside,
And bade their children know, with pride,

“ ‘Twas Messer Angelo.’ That said,
They stood awhile and ponderéd.

Fair women held their babes, and spake
Thy name. The child might haply take

Some portion of thy spirit. Yea !
They watched thy coming day by day.

Yet did men pity thee below,
And murmur “ Messer Angelo,

The Gods are lone.” Such stern constraint
May well make mortal spirit faint.

Do they so gird thee round with chains
That thou art bound in thrall and pains ?

Doth the Colonna love thee well ?
That were a tale too credible.

Dost thou love the Colonna ? Lo !
Thou soul of Michael Angelo.

Wert thou another, men would say,
That were a tale of every day.

But, being Michael Angelo,
How should men, being mortal, know ?

FRANCIS THOMPSON

THINE is all beauteous radiance and all charm,
Delectance, and rapt sensuousness, and the voice
That calls to the heart o' the sun, at morn's alarm,
"Great brother of song, rejoice."

THE SONG OF THE MOTHER

SLEEP on, O babe of mine, O mother's darling,
O rose of all the world, O flower of heaven,
O joy of all the earth that is about thee.

O rosebud that adorned the fields of heaven,
An angel placed thee gently in my keeping,
That all men's thoughts might rise to whence thou
camest.

Sleep on, O babe of mine, O mother's dearest,
It is the smile of God that plays about thee,
Or else thou talkest gently to the angels.

O lift thine eyes, dear babe, O mother's sweetest,
O eyes that look on earth with wisting wonder,
O seas of unimaginable blueness.

O babe, dear babe of mine, thy mother tends thee,
O sun of all the worlds and all the heavens,
How gladly are the paths of earth illumined.

COME, LITTLE MOTHER

COME, little mother,
Out in the sunshine.
Playtime, 'tis playtime,
Lessons are over.
Where are you, mother ?
Sweet, I have found you.
Now I run, mother,
Round you and round you.

There is a rainbow.
Oh ! let us find it.
Mother dear, angels
Are hiding behind it.
Come with me, mother,
We will not mind them.
Haste, little mother,
Find them, oh ! find them.

CITY WEARINESS.

O, I will go back to my cottage in the country,
I will go back very humbly to the garden that I love.
I will talk to all the roses till they tell me beauty's
 secrets,
I will talk to all the lilies till my life shall grow as
 purely,
I will list to all the birds till I sing for joy of singing,
I will stand beneath the stars as they move,
I will go back very lowly to my father's faith in God.

For, O, I am aweary of the City, that is dreary.
Please God I will go back to my garden that I love.
For riches have no grace, where never is there place
To rest awhile, to stand awhile, to commune as
 I move.
And ambition that doth harden, I will bury in my
 garden,
And the empty pride of learning let it go.
For riches, power and place, I have looked them in
 the face,
I have seen their sightless eyes, and their faces
 brazen-wise,
I have walked with them awhile, I would forget.
And my father's faith forgot, now may God remem-
 ber not,
I will go back very lowly to my father's rest in God.

THE ROUNDING OF THE YEARS.

Lines written for the Jubilee of the Birmingham Central
Literary Association.

In the Rounding of the Years,
To the brothers growing old,
To the friends of fifty years,

Friends of old :

To the union that doth find them,
To the men who come behind them,
And the Friendship that doth bind them,

As of old.

Through the Rounding of the Years,
Through the Rounding of the Years,
Be mine the heart that leaps to them,
The Spirit kin to theirs.

To the company of friends
Through the Rounding of the Years,
Mutual aims and mutual ends
All the years ;
To the joys they knew together,
To the bond that drew together,
And the lives that grew together
All the years.

To the brothers we have lost
In the Rounding of the Years,
Raise your glass and drink the toast,
 Silent all—
In their lives may we repeat them,
With the dear, dear memory greet them,
In the faith that we shall meet them,
 Silent all—.

BALLADS OF OLD BIRMINGHAM
NEW SERIES

"THE LUCK OF THE DE BERMINGHAMS."

"YE ancient horn with luck is borne,
But lost, ye luck is spent.
Who finds again ye ancient horn,
Shall find him good content."

Whiles Lion Heart and Saladin
Make fight for Holy ground,
The Frank, Sir Fouk de Birmingham,
The ancient luck hath found.

Though Lion Heart and Saladin
Hold peace, and Kings are lost ;
The Frank, Sir Fouk de Birmingham,
The seas hath safely crost.

Low Lion Heart and Saladin
Lie dead. Proud banners fly
Where stands Sir Fouk de Birmingham,
His castle towers anigh.

With years and fame, they lay him, wrapt
In blue of Martin's fold,
In good Saint Martin's shrine, to sleep
Till all the luck be told.

38 "LUCK OF THE DE BERMINGHAMS"

Ye ancient horn to Ireland borne
Hath won great lands and fame ;
Where still the ancient luck prevails,
And lives the knightly name.

But gone the ancient castle, gone
The knights and gone the fame ;
Save where the castle stood, the town
Stands mighty in the name.

" Ye ancient horn with luck is borne,
But lost, ye luck is spent.
Who finds again ye ancient horn,
Shall find him good content."

NOTE.—An antelope's horn, stated to have been brought back from the Crusades by a member of the De Birmingham family, who lies buried in St. Martin's Church, Birmingham. It was carried into Ireland by Robert de Birmingham, and was regarded as the source of the luck of the family, who afterwards became Earls of Lowth, in that country.

This antelope's horn, part of the arms of the noble family of Birmingham, enclosed in a glass casket, adorned with the crest and arms of the Birmingham family, was recently sold by order of the executors of the Rev. A. Goldney.

THE BERMINGHAMS OF FRANCE

Now thus, the luckless James,
Stood under the starry spray,
That stretches from France to Spain,
That is called the "Milky Way."
"Road that Saint James," he cried,
"Traced for the Frankish King,
For a path o'er the Saracen land,
With the axe of God a-fling.

"The path, that was strewn all stars,
Is dwindled to glowless dust.
No star, no star is there seen
For a sign, that a King may trust.
Alas ! no starry track
Leads ever to London town,
Where I and my fathers reigned,
And a stranger wears the crown."

And Pierre de Brindejone spake,
As he stood by the luckless King,
" My sires, that crossed the seas,
Knew this for a certain thing.
That our towers in Birmingham town
Should fall to a swift decay,
When a King should see no star
As he looked on Saint James' way."

Spake Luc Brindejone, " My sires
Took leave of their ancient stead,

When William, the Norman duke,
Saw stars of glory o'erhead.
They builded Birmingham towers,
And stood as strong men stand,
When valiant Clare made fight
In the starry Irish land.

"Ever they crossed the seas,
Because of the stars that shone.
How shall we stand, when the King
Sees none in the heavens—none?
We have crossed the seas as our sires,
Returned to our father's land.
And the stars are but glowless dust,
O King on an alien strand."

Now, on Saint Malo's walls,
That are gone to decay and old ;
Ever a Brindejonc stands,
And looks o'er Saint James' wold,
Till the glowless dust shall shine,
And a glorious starry ray
Shall lead a Brindejonc forth
To lands that his sons shall sway.

NOTE.—The De Berminghams are surmised to have been related to the Fitz Ansculphs, Lords of Dudley, who were originally Lords of Picquigny, near Amiens. They crossed to Ireland, and attained rank and title. Pierre de Brindejonc and Luc Brindejonc (the Gallicised form of the name) were attached to the Court of James II. at Saint Germain. The name still survives in St. Malo.

BARR BEACON.

OLD Druids in the mists rise high,
Waiting for the old world to die.
The old, old world, that will not fall
Howso' the Druid voices call.

For when the moon that battles night,
Walks calmly o'er the Beacon height,
The Druids follow in his tread,
Asking if yet the world be dead.

O Beacon, red with sacrifice,
High Altar, blood encompassed thrice,
Lie silent, till the doom atone
With wreckage of the world o'erthrown.

O Druids, bearded long and white,
With eyes long scant of any sight,
Beneath old altars lie, where clings
The blood of vain sin offerings.

The gods that die not, grant for boon
Speech only of the accomplished moon,
Elsewhiles within the watery deep,
The doom-watch of the world to keep.

So when the moon that battles night,
Walks calmly o'er the Beacon height,
The Druids follow in his tread,
Asking if yet the world be dead.

NOTE.—There is a legend that at certain phases of the moon, a mist, emanating from subterranean water, envelopes the hill, and that the forms of old Druids may be seen arising on the mist.

DUD DUDLEY.

Now this is the task of a man :

To do a thing with might,
To see, to shape the plan,
To wage a life-long fight.

O, they that play the man,
Wield more than an ancient name.
To stand a man among men
Is to conquer a world of shame.

'Twas thus Dud Dudley spake,
A youth in Balliol hall,
“Awhiles in furnace and forge
I will show a thing to them all.

“To spare the good, green woods,
To break the deep coal seam,
That the furnace may fiercer glow,
And the iron redly gleam.”

Men scorned the youth and his toil,
Nor ceased to burn the wood.
They broke his forges by stealth,
And joyed at the May-day flood.

Hate, nor envy, nor spoil,
Nor terrible flood could stem
The strength of the master youth ;
Nor these, nor the like of them.

Passionate, loyal heart,
That Cromwell failed to tame,
Cell and bolted doors
Are badge of a tyrant's shame.

Heart of the metal of Mars,
Battered with shocks of fate,
The hammer that welds the world
Doth shape it soon or late.

Men spare the good green wood,
Men break the deep coal seam,
The furnace doth fiercer glow,
And the iron redly gleam.

NOTE.—Dud Dudley, presumably related to the great family of that name, while still a youth, fresh from Balliol College, was set to look after three ironworks in the Chase of Pensnett. He conceived the idea of using pit-coal instead of wood for the furnaces, and met with the greatest hostility from neighbouring ironmasters. Neither this, nor the May-day flood of 1620, which destroyed his works, daunted him. He suffered great persecution and loss, and was imprisoned by Cromwell for his unflinching loyalty to the King, but remained consistent through life in the pursuit of his patents, thus preserving the fast vanishing trees of his country.

LORD JOHN DE BIRMINGHAM

Woe to the Bruce, though Dundalk hold
Be ta'en, and Bruce be crownéd King.

Woe to the Bruce, though all the South
In flame be perishing.

Call out thy companies, Lord John.

At Faughart on the Northern height,
Shall doom be wrought, dire doom, that men
Shall tell with hushed affright.

Call out thy stern battalions. Slay !

The Scotsmen flee ; yield mercy none,
The Bruce is stubborn. Stubborn, falls.
The fight is thine, Lord John.

Thou tear'st the traitor limb from limb,
On walléd town and castle gate
The crows shall eat his flesh. His head
Shall grace King Edward's state.

Doom, e'en for doom, Lord John, be thine ;
Louth's Earl at Edward's glad decree.
'Tis little joy is thine, that hold'st
The manse of Athenry.

In Connaught, though the O'Conor hides,
Woe to thee, John, Earl Louth, though far
Thy companies thou proudly lead'st
In Edward's Scottish war.

Woe to thee, John, Lord Justice, woe !
Though Ulster's child thou tak'st to mate,
On Whitsun-eve shall doom be wrought,
And hate take toll for hate.

Doom falls upon thee, Earl, dire doom.
At feast with all thy race and name,
The rebels are upon thee, nought
Avails thy mighty fame.

Men tell of Ballivegan's halls,
And how a race was slain thereon.
Blood, even for blood, completest tale,
Doom, e'en for doom, Lord John.

NOTE.—In 1312-6, Ed. II., John de Birmingham (of the family of our ancient lords) was knighted by Roger, Lord Mortimer, then Lord Justice of Ireland, for his valiant services. In the ninth of that reign he was Commander-in-Chief of the English forces in Ireland, and with Sir Edward Tute and Sir Miles Verdun, marched against Edward Bruce (brother to the King of Scots) who had been crowned King by the Irish. The forces met at Dundalk, where Bruce was defeated with great loss. Sir John de Birmingham had his prisoner decapitated, the Bruce's head was sent to King Edward, and de Birmingham rewarded with the Barony of Athenry and Earldom of Louth, the latter honour expiring with him. In 1321 he was one of the Lord Justices of Ireland. Eight years later, on Whitsun-eve, while at feast, he and his family and retainers were barbarously murdered by the rebellious Irish.

HENRY FITZGEROLD, LORD OF
SMETHWICK

IN Aquitaine love hath no way
But whom it hates to slay.

Nor is the blood of Aquitaine,
Queen Eleanor's in vain.

The wrong no queen may lightly brook
Hath mantled to her face, and shook

Her pride e'en in its inmost tower.
Hath Rosamond a bower,

And shall the Queen not know ? In vain,
Fitzgerold, Queen's high chamberlain,

Thou pitiest Clifford's erring child,
She, by the King beguiled,

Too frailly fair, too sweet a thing,
For hate's mad reckoning.

Fitzgerold, lord of Smethwick, be,
Men's judgments, praise of thee.

And though the Queen may rage, the King
Shall give proud answering.

In Woodstock sleeps fair Rosamond,
The Queen's fierce hate beyond.

In Aquitaine love hath no way
But whom it hates to slay.

For Woodstock's maze the Queen doth tread
By path of silken thread.

“ O Rosamond, 'tis thou the King
Hath ta'en. Now give thou answering

“ By poison or by steel. The way
Of death is thine to-day.

“ Drink, fool, or by God's seraphim
I tear thee limb from limb.

“ Fool ! Fool ! Not all King Henry's power
Can raise thee in thy bower.”

“ Fitzgerold, Nay ! thou com'st too late
To stay thy Queen's just hate.

"In Aquitaine, love hath no way
But whom it hates to slay."

NOTE.—Henry, son of Gerold, Lord of Smethwick, or Smedewic (*Doomsday*), was Royal Chamberlain to Eleanor of Aquitaine, wife of Henry II. In 1166 he succeeded his brother Warine in the possession of Smethwick and probably wielded considerable Court influence owing to his official position and to the King's domestic weakness through his intrigue with the "Fair Rosamond" Clifford.

Queen Eleanor is said to have found her way through the labyrinth at Woodstock, in which Rosamond was concealed, by means of a silken thread, and to have forced Rosamond to drink a poisonous draught.

OUR LADY'S WELL

O GLADLY men go on Our Lady's Day,
Through Our Lady's wood to Our Lady's well.
Her shrine is decked with trophies. Way
For the cripple's crutch and the blind man's bell.
The blind, the lame, and the sick, they tread
The path of the wood, nor ask for alms ;
The eager cripple, the blind man led,
Singing Our Lady's praise and psalms.

Who bows at Our Lady's shrine the morn,
And drinks of Our Lady's well ; for him,
The healing hand and the joy newborn,
Gladness and wholeness of life and limb.
O priests, who stand at Our Lady's shrine,
And pray at Her well ; men bring thee these—
Hearts that leap at the name divine,
And stricken bodies and bended knees,

The lame, the blind, and the sick, they kneel
At Our Lady's well, and drink and call
On Our Lady's name, that shall haply heal,
And lo ! Her hand hath mended them all.
They throw their crutches ; they freely roam ;
They see, are whole. There are trophies new
At Our Lady's shrine, and they haste them home.
And lo ! the wood is a-blossom through.

NOTE.—Mention is made in a document dated 1347 of a dwelling in Egebaston Strete leading towards “God well field,” and there can be no doubt that this alluded to the Lady Well, possessed of wonderful healing virtues, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, and close to the Priest’s House, afterwards called the Rectory or Parsonage of St. Martin. The overflow from the well helped to sustain the moat round the Parsonage, and joined by other waters from the neighbourhood of Holloway Head and the hill above Pinfold Street, passed into the Manor House moat. The Lady Well Baths were historically famous. Hutton says they were the finest in the kingdom. The Holy Well of the Blessed Virgin, towards which mediæval pilgrims wended their way through the Hurst and Lady Wood, still exists, covered over, its miraculous waters turned into the drains, Lady Well Walk being the only reminder left to us of the name.

THE WOOING OF JOHN ARDEN

Was ever so strange a wooing,
Was ever so mad a raid,
Was ever love's rede so read ere this,
By youth that loved a maid ?

Son of the haughtiest Arden,
Proud, too, was he of his race,
But dearer held than the Arden hall,
Light of his mistress' face.

Fiercely haughtiest Arden
Spake him a scornful "Nay,"
By pride of his mighty ancestry,
And lands he too should sway.

Now Alice, fairest of maidens,
Was child of Bracebridge bold,
Who counted sires of the Arden stock,
And held the Mercian hold.

Alice, at Kingsbury, pined,
And Richard her sire waxed sore.
Early one morn he mounted his men
For ride to Pedimore.

Straight to the hall of the Ardens,
For sake of Alice his child,
He galloped and seized the lover fain,
Was ever raid so wild ?

O wroth was haughtiest Arden.
Before great judges and King,
He told the tale of the wrong was his,
Nor hap'd till now this thing.

Yet little heeded John Arden,
And little Alice was dread
Of judge or King. In Kingsbury hall,
Love's path was fair to tread.

Great King and Judges decreed
The twain should wed. For redress,
Should Bracebridge give Arden his swiftest
horse,
And Arden the twain should bless.

Was ever so strange a wooing,
Was ever so mad a raid,
Was ever love's rede so read ere this,
By youth that loved a maid ?

NOTE.—John, son of Walter Arden, of Pedimore and Park Hall, was in love with Alice, daughter of Richard Bracebridge, of Kingsbury Hall, who was also of Arden descent. Arden's father refused to countenance the match, and Alice pining, Richard Bracebridge seized John Arden by force, and held him a willing prisoner at Kingsbury Hall. Walter Arden appealed to King Edward IV. and the law for redress. It was decreed the marriage should take place, and that Bracebridge should give Arden his best horse in expiation of his trespass.

STAUNCHEL, THANE OF WITONE

Now Edward, the King Monk, is dead,
Wherefore, O Staunchel, lift thine head

As fits a thane who holds in scorn
The shaven crown and weakling born.

O Staunchel, thane of Witone, bring
Thine homage to the Saxon King,

Great Godwin's son, Earl Harold. Lay
Thy hands within his hands this day,

Liege-man of life and limb, and own
The Saxon on the Saxon throne.

At Stamford flee the Viking host,
O Golden Dragon, guard the coast

Lest Norman William range his power
In England in her mortal hour.

Yet Harold is forsown. His oath
Lies heavy on his liegemen's troth.

The Normans land ! Lord Harold, bring
Thine housecarles to the South, and fling

Their ranks against thy foes, and raise
The dragon of great Wessex days.

The King is slain. For oath forsworn,
God terribly hath vengeance borne.

For Harold, that sware William faith,
Lies circled by his host in death.

Nor is God mocked. And thou, to him
Th' oathbreaker, liege of life and limb,

Dost swear Duke William faith, and lay
Thy hands within his hands that sway.

O Staunchel, thane of Witone, yet
Thy lands are thine. Lest thou forget

Thine oath, is Harold slain, and lies
His host around him circlewise,

Mute, silent, with blank eyes that stare
To Heaven, that God grant healing there.

NOTE.—Staunchel is mentioned in Doomsday Book as possessing the freehold of Witone before the Conquest, and subsequently retained by his successors under William Fitz Ansculph.

LELAND IN BIRMINGHAM

GREAT Harry's chaplain, Leland, ride
Through England o'er the country side.

Note well the ancient landmarks. Speed
Thy tidings that the King may read

Of each old place of fame, and praise
The lords of England's golden days.

Now ride where hammers loudly beat
The anvils in the pretty street

Called "Dirtey," where, for praise of God,
The "proper chappell" oft is trod.

Where fair the timbered mansion stands,
And the "brooke" runs adown the lands.

Now ride the ford, and "up along"
The hill where gabled houses throng

The "Parroch Church," and closely note
The ancient home and circling moat.

Now write King Harry, to thine eyes
The town is fair, and clerkly-wise,

Add, there be smiths, that use to make
All tools and knives, that in their wake

Naylor^s and lorimers live there,
And prosperous is the town, and fair.

A score, score years have sped, and men,
Who read what thou did'st clerkly pen,

See pictured clear their town, and praise
Leland of Great King Harry's days.

NOTE.—John Leland, a chaplain to King Henry VIII., was appointed by that monarch to make an itinerary of England and to write a record of the ancient buildings of the country.

He visited Birmingham in 1538, and his description is given in the above words. Deritend Chapel, and the "Old Crown House," by St. Martin's Church, are specially alluded to by Leland.

TOM TIDDLER

O, THE urchins played about his beat and called his mighty name,

Thomas Tiddler.

His form was large, his breath was short, his face with beer aflame,

Thomas Tiddler.

But the infants toddled round him, and shrill voices piped with glee,

O, I'm on Tom Tiddler's ground, Tom Tiddler can't catch me.

His baton stout was a thing to fear, and strong his mighty arm,

Thomas Tiddler.

And whoso silver stole or gold beheld him with alarm,

Thomas Tiddler.

But for tipplers he'd a weakness, as they called in drunken glee,

O, I'm on Tom Tiddler's ground, Tom Tiddler can't catch me.

O, he never saw the foolish, with one eyc he could not see,

Thomas Tiddler.

But to unjust men and cruel, he was stern as stern could be,

Thomas Tiddler.

And for boys who called out after he was always on the run,

Puffing, panting, never catching, swearing maybe, just for fun.

O, he's dead and now they miss him, though you seldom hear his name,

Thomas Tiddler.

Men remember how he chased them, idle boys for fun aflame,

Thomas Tiddler.

And there's many a man would greet him, could men shout in old time glee,

O, I'm on Tom Tiddler's ground, Tom Tiddler can't catch me.

NOTE.—Thomas Tiddler was a well-known member of the Birmingham Police Force in 1837, when there were only nineteen policemen in Birmingham.

NELSON IN BIRMINGHAM

WE knew him by high countenance,
His arm off-shorn, his sightless eye ;
These gave he to his land, that still
Did call him forth to die.

We thronged about his steps. We stood
Ennobled by his coming. Yea !
We watched his going forth, and strode
After to proudly say—

“ Here walked the joy of England’s sons,
The pride of England. Yea, her praise
Upon the waters memorable
Unto her latest days.”

His glorious doom hath stricken us low,
Who scarcely England’s safety heed
Or prize of Trafalgar, when now
He comes no more indeed.

He walked among us. Therefore proud
We raise the stone, that down the years
Our sons shall know the man who towered
Foremost amid his peers,

And was the land's heart. Yea ! in him
The land's rejoicing fiercely blent—
Lord Admiral of her seas, renowned,
Captain of men's content.

NOTE.—Nelson accompanied by Sir William and Lady Hamilton arrived at Styles's (afterwards the Royal) Hotel on Monday, 30th August, 1802.

Thousands of the inhabitants thronged to meet him and crowded round the hotel, the bells pealing a welcome to him. In the evening he visited the theatre, the crowd dragging him in his carriage. A tremendous ovation was accorded to him at the theatre, and he was escorted back by a torch-light procession.

The following days Nelson visited the chief manufactories, being followed throughout by many thousands of people. The monument to him in the Bull Ring was erected after his death at Trafalgar.

HENRY GOUGH OF OLD FALLINGS

RING the bells in Wulfruna's town,
With hat rich-plumed and tasselled spear,
There's many a loyal cavalier,
That speeds to fight for the king his crown.

Cheer aloud, for the royal Charles
Stands with his faithful townsmen bold.
Pile his coffers with good red gold,
Who needs must fight with his traitor carles.

Red were the autumn leaves and gold,
Rich and poor on that Sabbath day
Brought their treasures, and turned to pray
In Wulfruna's house for the king his hold.

Gough, the miser of eighty years,
Shook his head as they bade him give,
Muttered only "a man must live,"
And "a king must settle a king's affairs."

Now loyal was miser Gough at heart,
Though he shook his head in the face of men.
He counted his gains with his goose quill pen,
And set a pile for the king his part.

A thousand guineas were heavy tale,
Yet he added a full two hundred more
And, donning his cloak, he closed his door,
At dark of night, as he crossed the pale.

He came and sought for the king his grace,
And prayed him take for his hour of stress,
The gift of an old man's plenteousness ;
And lowly bowed to the royal face.

Charles looked once on the princely pile,
And once and again on the miser's face,
And bade him kneel ; with kingly grace
He drew his sword, yet he stayed awhile.

For the old man shrank from the blue-lit steel,
And prayed that none of his deed might know,
His honour was greater thus, and low
In his chamber, he for his king would kneel.

He hath kissed the hand of his royal sire.
On the morrow morn is a miser grey,
That the people scorn as they turn away,
Whose soul is not for a man to hire.

NOTE.—Henry Gough of Old Fallings, Wolverhampton, a reputed miser, eighty years old, secretly gave what was then the large sum of twelve hundred pounds to King Charles I., when that king was in Wolverhampton organising his forces. He refused the honour of knighthood. Gough was the ancestor of the Gough-Calthorpe family.

SAINT BARBARA'S SHRINE

THE people's hearts are waxen cold,
They bring no offering, jewels or gold,
To the shrine of the head of Saint Barbara.

Mitred abbot and canons white,
Who builded right well for God's delight,
Lament at the shrine of Saint Barbara.

Monks, white-robed, the aisles that trod,
Three centuries have peace of God.
Be praise to the shrine of Saint Barbara.

Bright-hued walls and tapestry,
And storied windows, wondrously
Tell of the holy Saint Barbara.

Aisles, dim-lit, and carven roof,
Hold all save lofty thoughts aloof,
By spell of the shrine of Saint Barbara.

White-robed canons, at dead of night,
And mitred abbot, the King despite,
Pray at the shrine of Saint Barbara.

God soften the King's hard heart. Assoil
The prince who thinketh to take for spoil
The shrine of the head of Saint Barbara.

Holds each a candle lit, in hand,
That God may lighten a wicked land.
Lights o'er the shrine of Saint Barbara.

Of a sudden, a wind. The lights out-blown
Leave dark the Church. God's will is known.
Monks weep at the shrine of Saint Barbara.

Abbot's mitre and staff and ring,
A broken-hearted offering,
Are laid at the shrine of Saint Barbara.

At break of dawn driven one by one,
The white-robed monks afar walk on.
Woe ! woe ! to the shrine of Saint Barbara.

Of the splendid aisles, stands a broken wall,
Of the white-robed monks, but a memory small.
Woe ! woe ! to the shrine of Saint Barbara.

NOTE.—Hales Owen Abbey, the shrine of the head of Saint Barbara, was founded by King John, and conferred upon the White Canons of Premonstre. They erected a splendid Abbey, and many local manors were appropriated for its endowment. The Abbey was dissolved by King Henry VIII. in 1538, and its possessions given to Sir John Dudley. The buildings are now almost entirely decayed.

66 LINES WRITTEN AT NELSON'S STATUE

LINES WRITTEN AT NELSON'S STATUE IN TIMES OF NATIONAL DANGER

WHENEVER the land's at stake,
Men see in the dead of night
Starry showers that break
O'er the mists of folded light,
And the land's dead heroes wake
And call the muster aright.

The threat of the foe was loud,
In the brew of a deadly blast,
I stood by the statue proud
As the shower of the stars fell fast.
And lo ! a ship on the cloud,
And the men of the mighty past.

Out of the shadows they came ;
The hosts of the mighty dead,
Who wrought the foemen's shame,
And scattered their fleets a-dread ;
The names, that the English name,
With proudly uplifted head.

LINES WRITTEN AT NELSON'S STATUE 67

Nelson, the lion soul,
Rodney and Blake and Drake ;
These who gained the goal,
Who followed the foeman's wake,
And none upon the roll
But had fought for England's sake.

They held their counsel apart,
Ranged on the central deck,
And never an English heart,
But throbbed as he craned his neck,
And leaped with an eager start
As he came at Nelson's beck.

" Ye range," he said, " for the strife
That cometh at careless nod,
The storms of travail are rife,
The lees of pleasure are trod.
A man hath only a life
That rests in the hands of God.

" But the deeds ye do are done,
And cowardly deeds and brave
Are judged in the light of the sun,
And told on the rolling wave ;
And none shall miss, though he run,
The hour that nameth his grave."

Back to the shadows they drew,
The hosts of the mighty dead ;

68 LINES WRITTEN AT NELSON'S STATUE

Over the storms that brew
They hold imperial tread.
Glad in my courses a-new
I turned as the stars o'erhead.

NOTE.—The bronze statue of Lord Nelson in the Bull Ring was executed by Westmacott—then at the age of twenty-four—and uncovered June 6th, 1809. The corner posts are old cannon from the Admiral's ship the *Victory*.

The spirit of Nelson still animates his countrymen in times of national danger.

NICHOLAS BROME OF BADDESLEY
CLINTON

At Whitefriars Church as he strode from Mass,
Thou slewest my sire in the porch, alas !

For long three years have I sought the day,
To face thee here in the open way.

And now, John Herthill, 'tis sword to sword,
A life to take and a life to ward,

And God on high. Though thou guard'st thee well,
They wait for thy soul at the gates of hell.

Now well, O Brome, in thy father's stead,
Is Baddesley thine, and thou wivéd.

O what is the part of a priest in sin,
Or what thy wife, that he chocketh her chin.

Die ! die ! false priest. Would'st laugh and scoff ?
Thou diest, and that is the end thereof !

Nay, what is the end that is known to God,
Or what the laws that they be rough trod ?

Perchance the end shall be peace, perchance,
A shield reversed and a broken lance.

But the thing men see is the tower raised high,
And the sounds men hear are the bells that cry.

But the end. What is man, that he seek to know
The way of the wind or the last year's snow ?

NOTE.—John Herthill, steward to Richard Neville, the King Maker, Earl of Warwick, had mortgaged the Manor of Woodloes to John Brome of Baddesley Clinton, and wished to redeem the same, but the latter refused to part with the land. Herthill then stabbed John Brome in the porch of White Friars, London. It is said that Thomas Brome smiled when he saw his father slain, for his father forgave him for so doing in his will.

The eldest son, Nicholas, succeeded his father, John, at Baddesley Clinton, and resenting the murder, some three years after waylaid Herthill in Longbridge field, on his way to Barford, to attend the Earl of Warwick's Court ; and slew him, for which he had to pay for numerous masses. Sometime after coming into the parlour of the Old Hall, tradition says he caught the priest "chockyng hys wyf under chin," and was enraged, and slew him ; for these offences he had to build the tower of Baddesley Clinton Church, known to this day as the Church of the Expiation.

DEPARTURE OF EDMOND HAWES
OF SOLIHULL

"HERE, sojourners from days of old,
In Heaven, citizens." Unfold

The memories of dear youth. Recall
The words upon the Hillfield Hall,

With silver chevron set between
The leopards' faces' golden sheen.

Not lord, as all thy fathers were,
That Brome and Greswolde mated there.

But younger son, apprentice bound,
A cutler in the daily round ;

A sojourner that seek'st to find
The city in the heavens reclined.

In England, land beloved, men have
No leave to worship God. The wave

That bounds, doth bear o'erseas afar,
Its sons who must serve God. The star

Of faith doth lead, and down the west
Thou go'st whom God hath called and blest.

Now speeds the good ship *James*. The roar
Of breakers on New England shore

Is song most sweet, and o'er the strand
Thou walkest as on holy land.

Edmond Hawes, a younger son of Edmond Hawes, of Hillfield Hall, Solihull, was apprenticed to a cutler of London, and was sworn a free cutler in 1634. He sailed 5th April, 1635, in the ship *James*, for New England, and subsequently lived in Duxbury, an emigrant for "conscience sake," and died at a great age.

Hillfield Hall was rebuilt by William Hawes, his grandfather, in 1576, and the front is substantially the same to-day.

Over the front door are the initials of William Hawes and his wife Ursula, and the motto—

H.

W. V.

1576.

Hic hospites in Cœlo Cives.

Arms : Sable, a chevron argent, between three leopards' faces or.

THE NEWS OF WATERLOO BROUGHT TO BIRMINGHAM

WAS never a coach that was driven so fast,

As we drove from London town.

Was never a throat but was hoarse at last,

As we shouted the tidings down.

We hoisted the flags and away we flew,

Glad to carry the tidings through,

Mad to carry the tidings through,

Through to Birmingham town.

Was never a shout men's hearts that stirred,

As the cheers we raised that day.

Was never a man but we gave the word,

And never were men so gay.

We shouted the news and away we sped,

Glad to carry the news ahead,

Mad to carry the news ahead :

Never were men so gay.

Was never a village nor town but cheered

As we rode upon the wind.

And ever we heard as the horses reared,

The joy-bells peal behind.

We coaxed the horses, and sped them on,

Mad to arrive and glad to be gone,

Glad to arrive and mad to be gone,

With the joy-bells on the wind.

Was never a task but men laid it down,
There was never a day like the day
We rode from London to Birmingham town,
Nor ever a land so gay.
We bore the news of Waterloo,
We were mad to carry the tidings through,
Glad to carry the tidings through,
“Wellington’s won the day!”

NOTE.—The news of the victory of Waterloo was brought to Birmingham by coach.



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